



State of Connecticut

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RB 5318 AN ACT CONCERNING THE REVISION OF MUNICIPAL CHARTERS

Planning and Development Committee Public Hearing
March 2, 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of RB 5318, An Act Concerning the Revision of Municipal Charters. This bill is intended to provide municipalities with an **option** to engage in a limited charter revision process. By having such an option, the appointing authority would be able to either set a limited agenda of what may be considered by the charter revision commission or direct the commission to undertake a comprehensive review.

CGS 7-190 states that 'The commission may also consider other items for inclusion in the proposed charter, other changes to the charter or home rule ordinance and such other items as it deems desirable or necessary.' Often times, municipalities are reluctant to make necessary changes to their charters since everything is subject to scrutiny once a charter is opened up under existing law. Those who have served on a charter revision commission know that public comment and hearings along with deliberations can be both time-consuming and costly. By providing an option to allow for limited items to be considered when appropriate, municipalities may be more likely to update their charters in a timely and cost-effective manner.

It is important to note that the public would still have an opportunity to provide input regarding the commission's charge at the time the commission is appointed. Also, this legislation does not in any way change the process for charter revision commenced by petition (CGS 7-189) which may include a list of general or specific recommendations for consideration. It simply provides the appointing authority with the option of limiting consideration to those general or specific recommendations and other issues the appointing authority may choose to direct the charter revision commission to take up.

Thank you for giving consideration to favorable passage of RB 5318. As always, I am happy to provide additional information or answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Clark Chapin
State Representative, 67th District